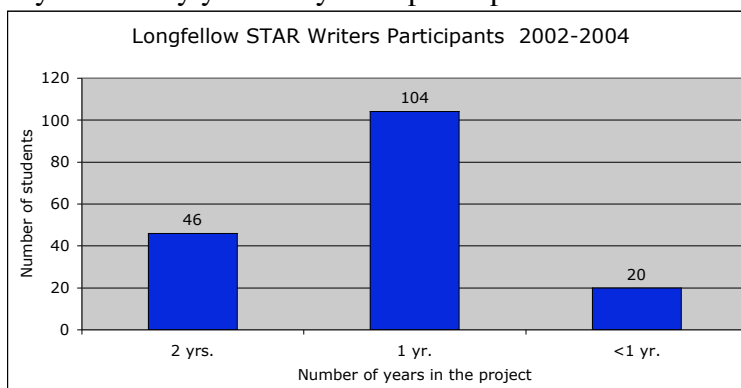


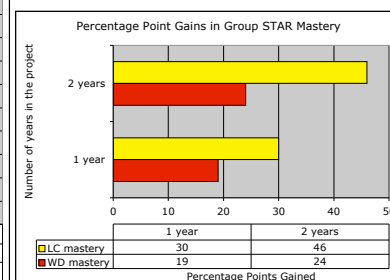
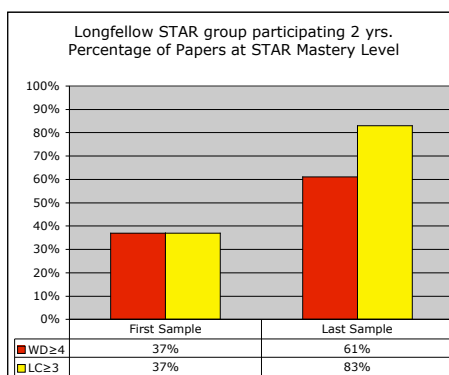
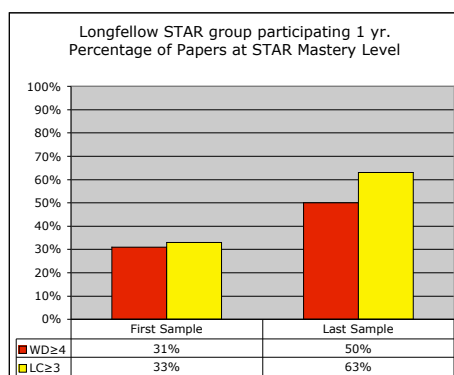
# Longfellow Elementary STAR Writers Project Writing Skill Improvements — 2002-2004

Longfellow Elementary, located in Muncie, joined Buddy in 2001 with anticipation of implementing STAR Writers beginning in the fall of 2002 at grades 3 through 5. Since that time, 170 students have participated in STAR at one or more of these grade levels for periods of 1 or 2 years. A breakdown of the number of students by how many years they have participated is shown below.



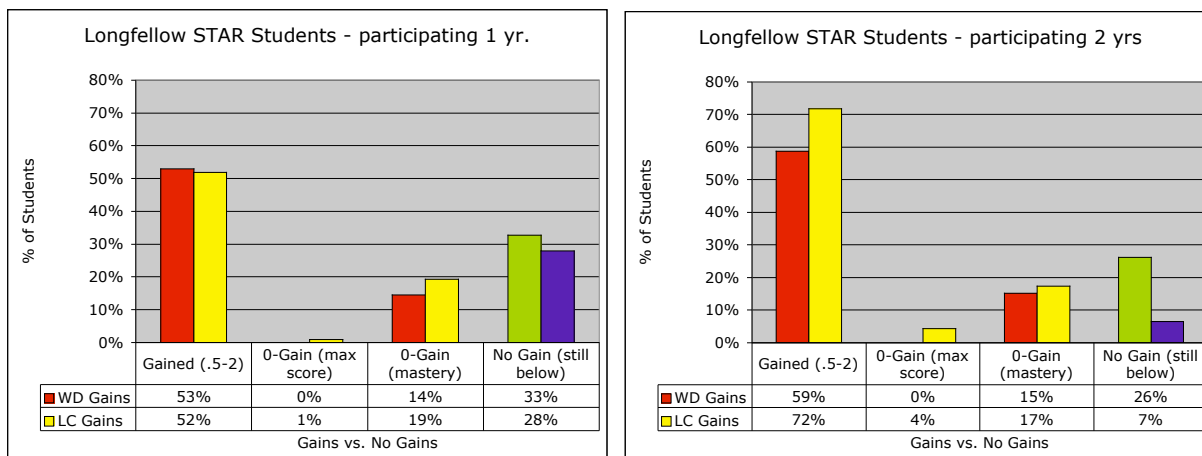
We have recently scored the last of 8 ISTEP+-like writing samples for STAR students in grades 3-5 at Longfellow. Though we have not yet analyzed all project data, this document summarizes some general findings from these periodic skill assessments broken down by the number of years the students participated in the program. The charts below compare the first sample results (taken as early as September 2002) with the final sample results (taken as late as April 2004) for each of these groups. The mastery cut scores, set by the STAR project at 4 of possible 6 points for Writing Development and 3 of possible 4 points in Language Conventions, are used to determine group progress throughout program implementation. Students in the 2-year group are 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade students this year. The 1-year participant group is comprised predominantly of students who were in 5<sup>th</sup> grade last year or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade this year.

Achievement growth was noted for both groups, though it is apparent that the longer students stayed in the project more growth occurred. The group who participated for one year only jumped 19 points in Writing Development and 30 points in Language Conventions. The 2-year participant group jumped 24 points in Writing Development and a phenomenal 46 points in Language Conventions as shown in the charts below.



Longfellow, if it follows the pattern of our other STAR schools' results, will find even more growth for students who are given the opportunity to participate for a third year.

It is clear that the individual student growth also fell in a similar pattern, with the more student gains occurring for children participating for a longer period of time. Two-thirds of students who participated for 1 year significantly improved writing development skills or, if they didn't show a score gain, remained above mastery level when comparing the first and last writing samples. 72% of students who participated for 1 year made significant gains or remained consistently above STAR mastery level in Language Conventions skills from the first to last sample. For the 2-year participant group, 74% of students made significant gains or remained above mastery level in Writing Development and 93% made gains in Language Conventions.



Though we still have much room to grow for academic gains in writing skills at Longfellow, the majority of students have enjoyed success in one or more writing assignments over the two-year period. Teachers report greater participation and enthusiasm for writing in their classes compared to two years ago. Improvement of writing quality for most students is clearly apparent through side-by-side comparison of their early samples to their most recent samples.

The levels of success attained at Longfellow Elementary are a direct result of commitment and tireless efforts of the local team of educators involved. Lon Sloan was principal during 2001/2003 when they were first getting Buddy core values integrated into the school and community through distribution of home computers and the first year of STAR implementation. Charles Kimbrough joined the team as school principal in 2003-2004 and has ably followed through with his inheritance of STAR, showing further school-wide gains in writing skills. Quality instruction provided by several dedicated teachers, the hard work of students, and enthusiastic support of parents has made all the difference for student success at Longfellow. The Longfellow STAR teaching team includes:

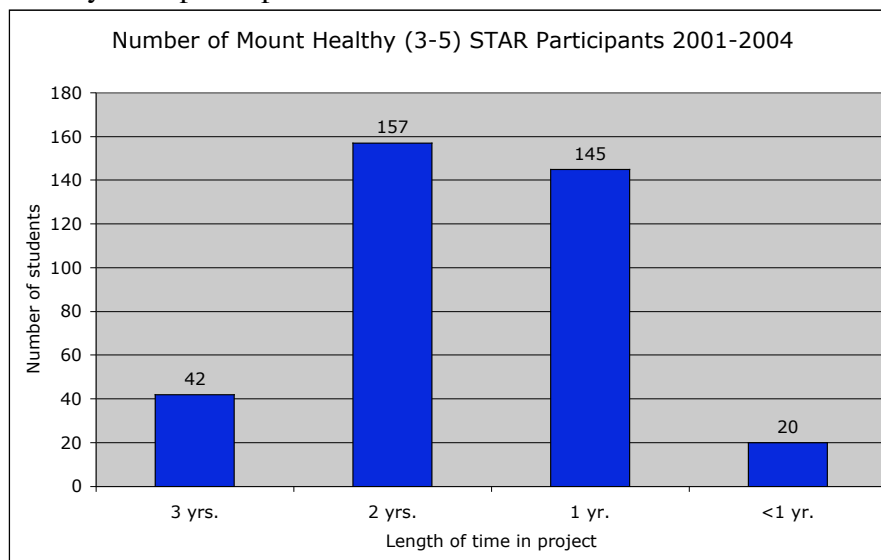
Denise Millben, Grade 3  
 Kathy Dawson, Grade 3 & 4  
 Sara Fauquher, Grade 4  
 Carol Myers, Grade 5  
 Chris Refner, Grade 5

Kay Bussa, school secretary, provided able assistance for myriad details and the district technical support team provided much needed services with setup and maintenance of school and home-based technology. District level administrative leadership was provided by Dr. Marlin Creasy, Superintendent, as well as by members of his administration and educational services team including: Steve Edwards, Warner Van Fleet, and Ermalene Faulkner.

A full report of the STAR project will be compiled and published in late 2004, including results from many other aspects of this program, such as: family involvement, technology use, classroom instruction strategies employed, classroom environment changes and other data perspectives.

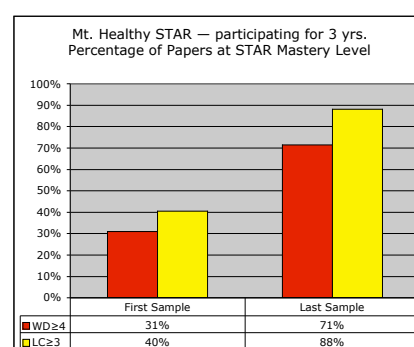
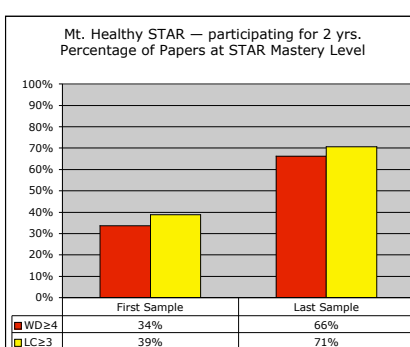
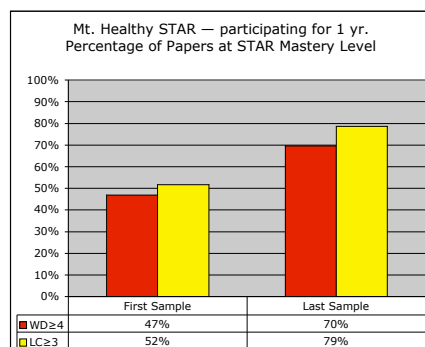
# Mount Healthy Elementary STAR Writers Project Writing Skill Improvements — 2001-2004

Mount Healthy has long been an active Buddy school. In 2001, Mount Healthy Elementary elected to participate in STAR Writers at grades 3-5. Since that time 364 students have participated in STAR at one or more of these grade levels for periods of 1, 2 or 3 years. A breakdown of the number of students by how many years they have participated is shown below.

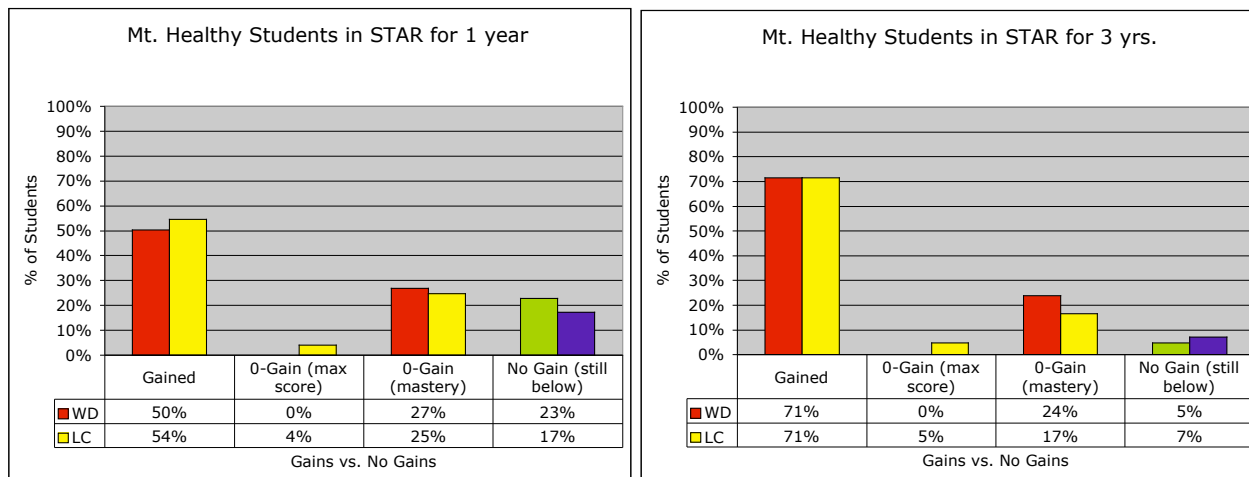


We have recently scored the final (of 12 total) ISTEP+-like writing sample for STAR students in grades 3-5. Though we have not yet analyzed all data, this document summarizes some general findings from these periodic skill assessments broken down by the number of years the students participated in the program. The charts below compare the first sample results (taken as early as September 2001) with the final sample results (taken as late as April 2004) for each of these groups. The mastery cut scores, set by the STAR project at 4 of possible 6 points for Writing Development and 3 of possible 4 points in Language Conventions, are used to determine group progress throughout program implementation. Students in the 3-year group are 5<sup>th</sup> grade students this year. The 2-year group is comprised of students who are in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades this year, and the 1-year group includes 5<sup>th</sup> graders from the first year of the project as well as this year's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes.

Achievement growth was noted for all groups, though it is apparent that the longer students stayed in the project more growth occurred. The group who participated for 1 year only jumped 23 points in Writing Development and 27 points in Language Conventions. The 3-year participant group jumped a phenomenal 40 points in Writing Development and 48 points in Language Conventions.



It is clear that the individual student growth also fell in a similar pattern. 95% of students who participated for 3 years significantly improved writing development skills or, if they didn't show a score gain, remained above mastery level when comparing the first and last writing samples. Only 7% of students who participated for 3 years did not make significant gains nor remain consistently above STAR mastery level in Language Conventions skills from the first to last sample. This can be compared to the students participating for 1 year only, where 23% did not consistently achieve a mastery level score or significantly improve their writing development scores over a year's time. 17% of the 1-year participants did not improve their language conventions scores or remain above mastery from the first to the last sample taken. A visual comparison of the two groups is shown in the charts below.



Every student received one or more scores of “4” or higher on Writing Development and every student received at least one “3” or higher on Language Conventions for one or more papers submitted in the project before the end of the second project year. Since these “on demand” samples rarely represent a student’s best writing performance, it is likely that every child has enjoyed success in many writing assignments over the 3-year period in their regular class assignments.

The levels of success attained at Mount Healthy Elementary are a direct result of excellent leadership provided by the principal, Karen Garrity, quality instruction provided by the teachers, hard work of students, and enthusiastic support of parents. The Mount Healthy STAR teaching team includes:

Trish Brennan, Grade 3  
 Ann Linn, Grade 3  
 Rob Musillami, Grade 4  
 Amy Nagel, Grade 4  
 Sherry Dettmer, Grade 5  
 Angie Nichalson, Grade 5  
 Kevin Stockdell, Grade 5  
 Susan Fry, Special Education  
 Jennifer Justis, Special Education

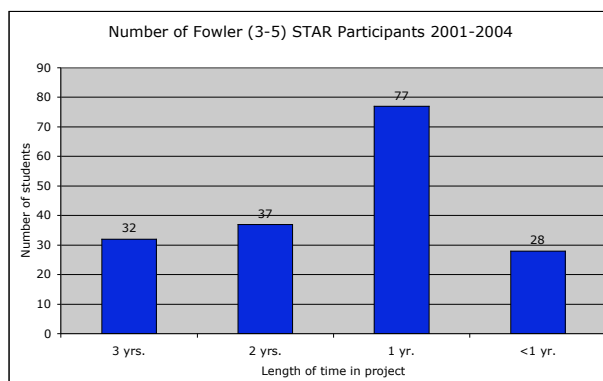
Jennifer Justis, Kelly Cunningham and Kim Kritzer also deserve recognition for carrying on the new instructional traditions of STAR Writers in their sixth grade classes this year.

The Mount Healthy team was ably assisted by Judy Teague, administrative assistant and Kristen West, computer technician. We also wish to note the great district level support provided by Dr. John Quick, Superintendent and Dr. Linda DeClue, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

A full report of the STAR project will be compiled and published in late 2004, including results from many other aspects of this program, such as: family involvement, technology use, classroom instruction strategies employed, classroom environment changes and other data perspectives.

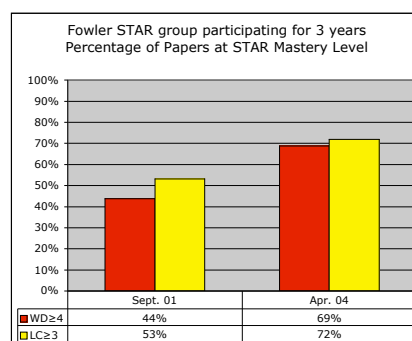
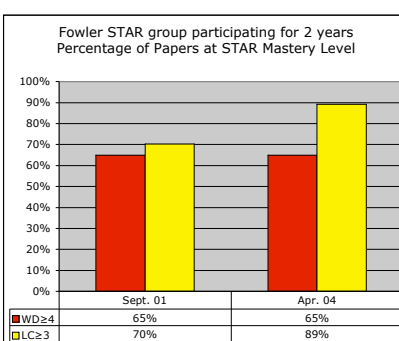
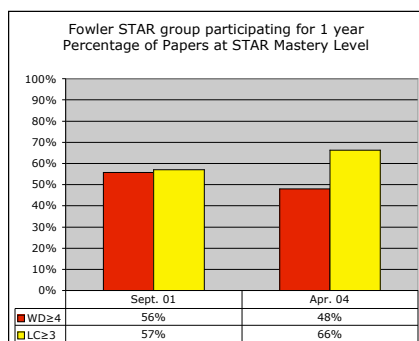
# Fowler Elementary STAR Writers Project Writing Skill Improvements — 2001-2004

Fowler has long been an active Buddy school. In 2001, Fowler Elementary elected to participate in STAR Writers at grades 3-5. Since that time 174 students have participated at one or more of these grade levels. A breakdown of the number of students by how many years they have participated is shown below.



We have recently scored the final (of 12 total) ISTEP+-like writing sample for STAR students in grades 3-5. Though we have not yet analyzed all data, this document summarizes some general findings from these periodic skill assessments broken down by the number of years the students participated in the program. The charts below compare the first sample results (taken in September 2001) with the final sample results (taken in April 2004) for these groups. The mastery cut scores, set by the STAR project at 4 of possible 6 points for Writing Development and 3 of possible 4 points for Language Conventions, are used to determine group progress throughout program implementation.

In the case of students participating for less than 2 years (typically 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders), little improvement was shown from the first to last sample in Writing Development. This particular comparison does not genuinely reflect the progress we know has occurred, however, because the first sample was not their worst performance and the final sample was far from either group's best performance. The students who participated for 3 years, however, increased the group mastery rate by than 24 percentage points over the course of the project. Significant gains are shown for Language Conventions skills for all groups.



It is clear that the students who were in the program the longest made the most gains in writing development. 84% of students who participated for 3 years significantly improved writing development skills or, if they didn't show a score gain, remained above mastery level when comparing the first and last writing samples. Only 5% of students who participated for just two years did not make significant gains nor remain consistently above STAR mastery level in Language Conventions skills from the first to last sample.

Every student received one or more scores of “4” or higher on Writing Development and every student received at least one “3” or higher on Language Conventions for one or more papers submitted in the project before the end of the second project year. Since these “on demand” samples rarely represent a student’s best writing performance, it is likely that every child has enjoyed success in many writing assignments over the 3-year period in their regular class assignments.

We are particularly pleased to note that the many special education students at Fowler Elementary have gained in both their confidence and skills as writers. Viewing papers submitted most recently, compared to those submitted at the beginning of the project, show definite improvements. In many cases, these recent papers are difficult to distinguish from regular education student efforts.

The levels of success attained at Fowler Elementary are a direct result of the leadership provided by the principal, Sandra Arini, quality instruction provided by the teachers, hard work of students, and enthusiastic support of parents. The Fowler STAR teaching team includes;

Kathleen McGinnis, Grade 3  
Kristie Rains, Grade 3  
Brandi Cain, Grade 3 & 4 Special Education  
Marilyn Hinshaw, Grade 4  
Rich McKinney, Grade 4  
Heather Logan, Grade 5  
Bob Sondgeroth, Grade 5  
Heather Holder, Grade 5 Special Education

The Fowler team was frequently and generously assisted by secretary, Julie LaGrange. It is also important to note the outstanding support provided by the district administration team led by Steve Wittenauer, Superintendent, and including Ross Sloat, Assistant Superintendent / Business Manager; Brandon Sorge, Director of Technology and Elaine Ballard, Instructional Technology Coordinator.

A full report of the STAR project will be compiled and published in late 2004, including results from many other aspects of this program, such as: family involvement, technology use, classroom instruction strategies employed, classroom environment changes and other data perspectives.

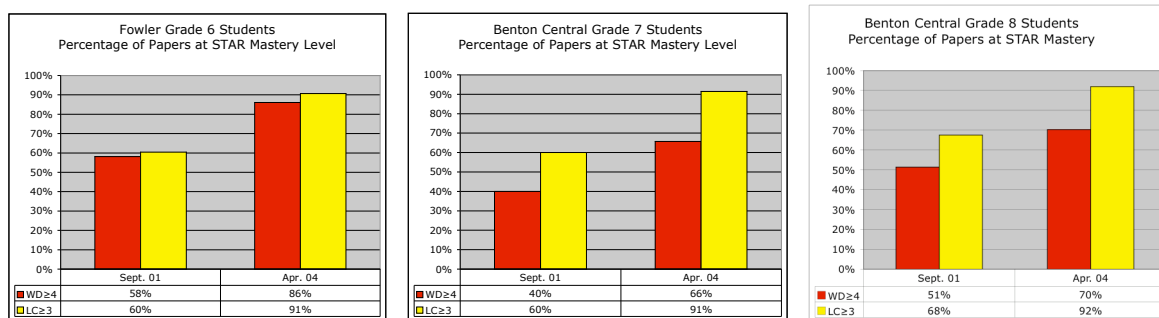
# Fowler Elementary / Benton Central Jr. High

## STAR Universal Writers Project

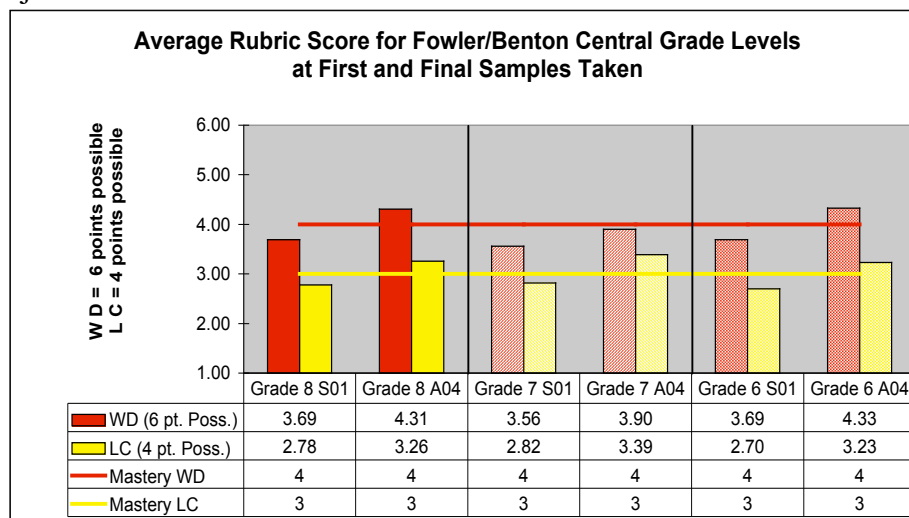
### Writing Skill Improvements — 2001-2004

Since the start of school in the fall of 2001, 158 individual students have participated in the STAR Universal Writers project at Fowler Elementary (Grade 6) and at Benton Central Jr. High (Grades 7-8). The project was phased in over the 3 years with sixth grade only participating in 2001 and then adding a successive grade level until 2003-2004 when all three grades participated. Unique to this STAR site, students from Fowler Elementary participated in STAR Writers at the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade levels also. This bolstered long-term project participation data. Even with some attrition over time a total of 115 students participated in one or both STAR and STAR Universal programs for three full years including many special needs students.

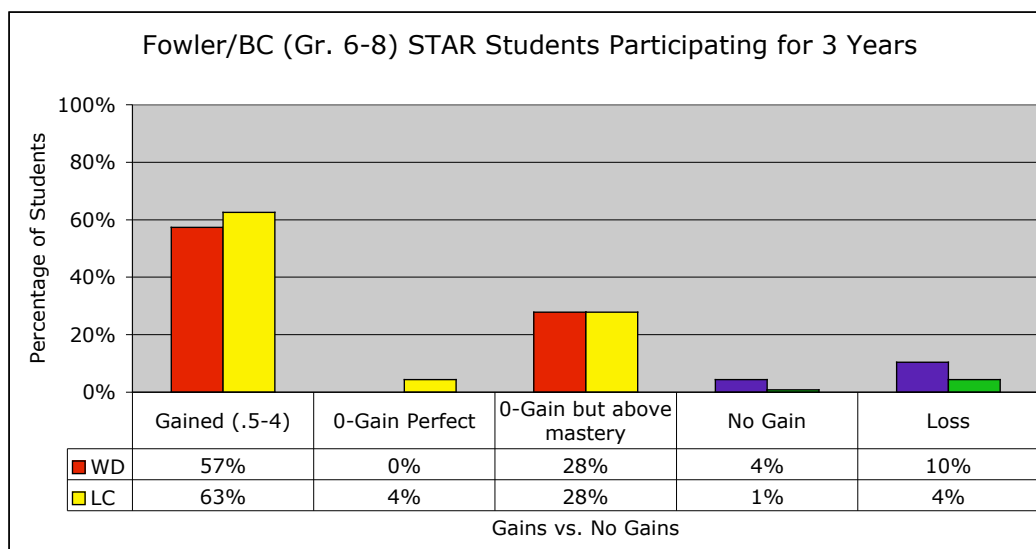
We have recently scored the final (of 12 total) ISTEP+-like writing sample for STAR students in grades 6-8. Though we have not yet analyzed all data, this document summarizes some general findings from these periodic skill assessments. The charts below compare the first sample results (taken in September 2001) with the final sample results (taken in April 2004) for all students who participated in STAR for 3 years. The mastery cut score, set by the STAR project at 4 of possible 6 points for Writing Development and 3 of possible 4 points, is used to determine group progress throughout program implementation. In all grades the group mastery rate increased significantly from the first to the final sample.



In addition to more students making the cut, each grade level improved the average rubric scores for Writing Development and Language Conventions. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade and in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the average score rose above the defined “cut” score of “4” for Writing Development by the end of the project. The average rubric score rose above the cut score of “3” for Language Conventions for all grade levels over the course of the project as shown in the chart below.



Perhaps more importantly, the vast majority of students showed individual progress in both Writing Development and Language Conventions skills, with 86% of students showing gains or remaining at or above the mastery rate from the first to the final sample. In Language Conventions, 95% of students improved significantly from their first sample or remained above mastery scores through to the last writing sample.



Every student received one or more scores of “4” or higher on Writing Development and every student received at least one “3” or higher on Language Conventions for one or more papers submitted in the project. Since these “on demand” samples rarely represent a student’s best writing performance, it is likely that every child has enjoyed success in many writing assignments over the 3-year period in their regular class assignments.

The levels of success attained at Fowler Grade 6 and Benton Central Grades 7 and 8 are a direct result of the leadership and instruction provided by the principals and teachers involved, the hard work of students, and constant support of parents. The teaching team for STAR Universal Writers in Benton Community Schools ably led by Sandra Arini, Principal at Fowler Elementary and Dave Reif, Principal at Benton Central Jr. High includes:

Mrs. Cathy Coats, Grade 6  
 Mrs. Lois Francis, Grade 6  
 Ms. Heather Holder, Grade 6 Special Education  
 Mr. George Hardebeck, Grade 7 Language Arts  
 Mr. Destin Haas, Grade 7 Social Studies  
 Mrs. Edith Fisher, Grade 8 Language Arts  
 Mr. Corey Robb, Grade 8 Social Studies

This team was generously assisted by Julie LaGrange, secretary at Fowler Elementary and important support of the district administration team led by Steve Wittenauer, Superintendent, including Ross Sloat, Assistant Superintendent / Business Manager; Brandon Sorge, Director of Technology and Elaine Ballard, Instructional Technology Coordinator.

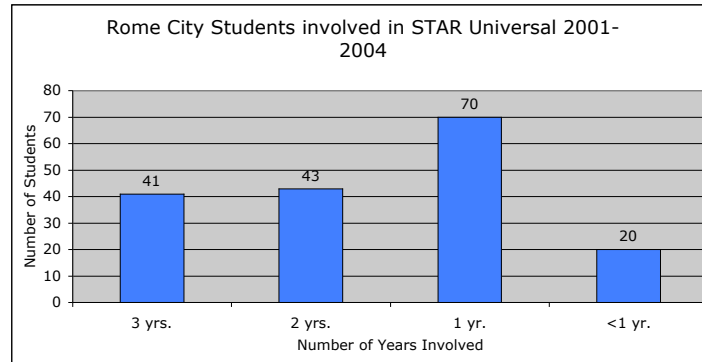
A full report of the STAR project will be compiled and published in late 2004, including results from many other aspects of this program, such as: family involvement, technology use, classroom instruction strategies employed, classroom environment changes and other data perspectives.



# Rome City's STAR Universal Project

## Writing Skill Improvements – 2001-2004

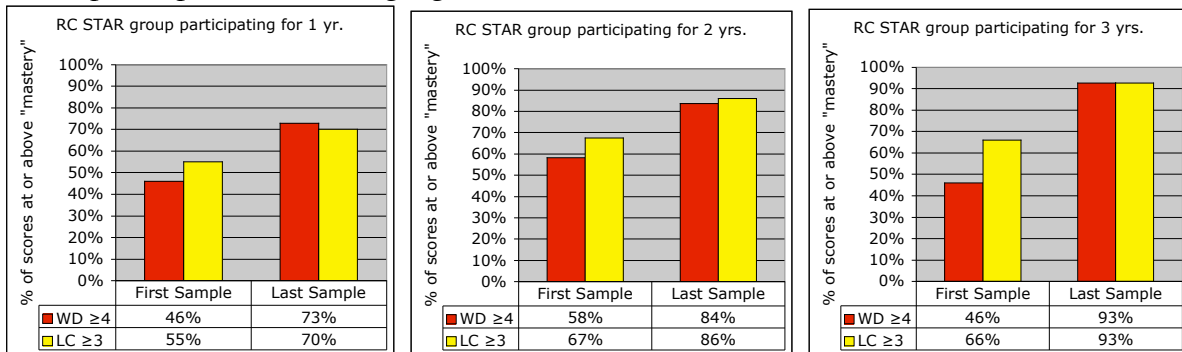
Now that we have completed the series of STAR handwritten writing samples we find there to be little doubt that Rome City students have greatly improved their writing skills over the past 3 years. The charts in this report compare data from scores of handwritten “ISTEP+-like” samples that were submitted for scoring at the state level and reflect the comparison of the first sample taken for each participating student group to the final sample taken by each group.



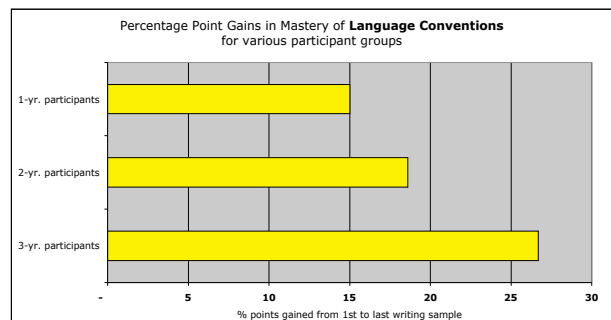
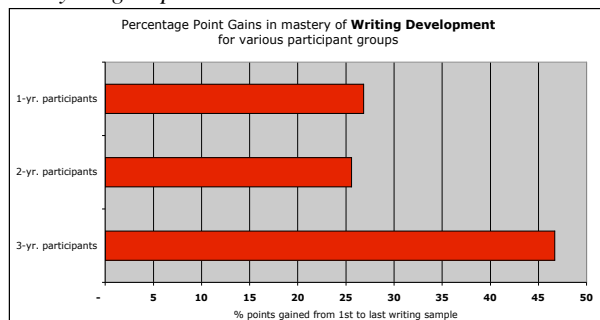
Participating students: 174 Rome City students participated in the STAR project between 2001 and 2004. Of these 20 students participated for less than 1 year and so their results are not counted in the data reported below. Students who participated all three years began in September 2001 and are now 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Generally speaking, students who participated for 2 years only started in September 2002 and those participating for 1 year only are those students who entered 6<sup>th</sup> grade in September 2003. There are a few exceptions within the 1 or 2 year participant groups because we also include those who participated in any one or two-year period of the project regardless of grade level.

### STAR Progress — Group Data

The STAR project set the “mastery” rate for group progress at 4 of 6 points possible for Writing Development skills and 3 of 4 points possible for Language Conventions skills.

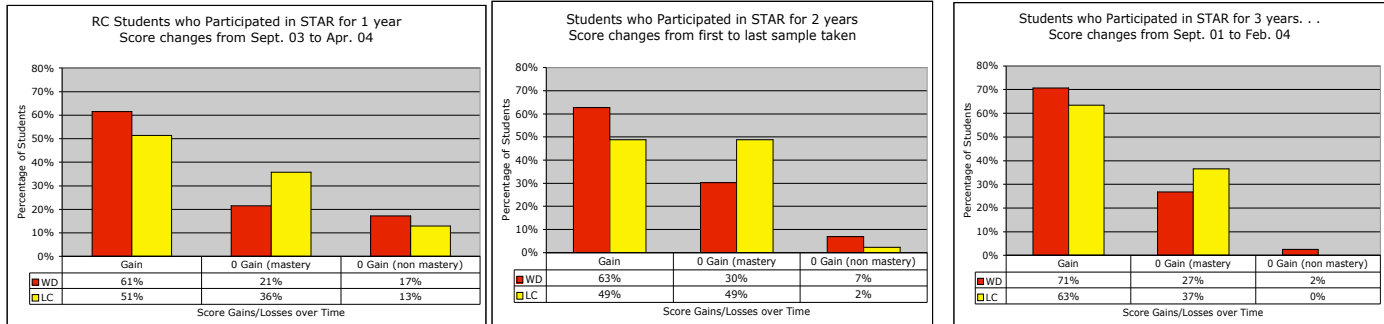


Though beginning mastery rates varied by the starting date of the 3 different groups, all groups improved on their group mastery rate in both Writing Development and Language Conventions, as shown in the above charts. Shown below, the greatest gains in Writing Development scores were made by the participant group that was involved in the project for the full 3 years though significant gains were made by all groups.



## STAR Progress — Individual Gains

This project is predominantly concerned, however, with helping students improve their individual abilities no matter where they start in their writing skill development. We are happy to report that nearly all Rome City students improved if they were not already at mastery level or above in their Writing Development and Language Conventions skills. As shown below, and as might be expected, the students in the project for the longest period (3 years) showed the greatest improvement in their Writing Development and Language Conventions scores.



*For students participating for one year only, 17% showed no improvement in Writing Development and 13% did not show improvement in Language Conventions scores. For students participating for two years, 7% have not gained, but all others remained at or above mastery levels or gained significantly in Writing Development. All but one 2-year student remained at or above mastery or gained ground in Language Conventions scores. For the three-year group, all students showed growth, if not mastery in Language Conventions with only one student not consistently achieving mastery in Writing Development on STAR writing samples.*

The vast majority of students succeeded on one or more of the sample writings collected over the course of the project in Writing Development and/or Language Conventions. Only 6 of the 174 students engaged in STAR at Rome City did not reach a mastery level in Writing Development on any of the ISTEP+-like writing samples. Only 3 did not reach mastery level in Language Conventions. Since these on-demand samples are rarely illustrative of a student's best work, we are confident that all students had many successful writing experiences during their participation in the project.

The success of STAR at Rome City School is directly attributable to that school's STAR Team focus on results. The leadership provided by the principal, Dave Pine, has no doubt lent support to an outstanding STAR teaching team at Rome City in grades 6 through 8:

Mrs. Amy Biedess, Grade 6 Language Arts  
Mrs. Anne Hudson, Grade 7 Language Arts  
Mrs. Amy Norton, Grade 8 Language Arts  
Mr. Steve Keck, Social Studies and Web Tech Team Support  
Mr. Ted Kruger, Social Studies Teacher  
Mr. Kieth Ginger, Mathematics Teacher  
Ms. Christina Gustin, Science Teacher

We would also like to thank Jo Drudge, School Library Media Specialist; Suzanne Stafford and Mary Ann Stark of the Rome City front office; as well as District Tech Support staffers, Rick Williams and Lillian Hess; and the district administration team for lending much needed support when and wherever necessary.

A full report of the STAR project will be compiled and published in late 2004, including results from many other aspects of this program, such as: family involvement, technology use, classroom instruction strategies employed, classroom environment changes and other data perspectives.